

Lowrey Elementary School is nestled in the culturally diverse suburban city of Dearborn, Michigan.

Socio-economics, language barriers, and mobility are factors that impact our school population of 700 students. Our school community is a home for thousands of Middle Eastern immigrants. The majority of students who enter our school have basic

interpersonal communication skills in a language other than English. 91% of our students come from economically disadvantaged households, 90% are eligible for Title I and/or bilingual services, and the population of English Language Learners ranges from 80-85%.



Lowrey's success is a product of our varied programs and initiatives. We utilize research-based instructional strategies, opportunities for all students to achieve, coordination of the Title I program with other programs, implementation of sustained research-based professional development, and established partnerships with parents, families, and the community. We mesh these components to provide a professional learning community that fosters learning.

The component we feel has been most significant to our school's success is the implementation of research-based instructional strategies. These strategies include Question Answer Relationship, Think Aloud strategy, Using graphs, charts and tables in Mathematical instruction, Daily Oral Language, Dressel's Type I-V Writing, and Genre Writing. Our implementation of these strategies has been successful due in part to the modeling and co-teaching initiatives our support staff have implemented.

We have many opportunities for all students to achieve. Intervention groups are developed by combined Literacy Coach, Compensatory Education and classroom teacher teams. These intervention groups ensure that our at-risk, on-level, and above-level children receive adequate services through differentiated instruction strategies on a daily basis. Programs in place to provide support for students that are not meeting academic standards include: Accelerated Compensatory Extended Day Tutoring Program, push-in and pull-out support staff intervention groups, monthly parent inservices, grade level meetings to collaborate, after school homework assistance program, after-school math and reading enrichment programs, and an accelerated summer school program. We monitor student performance via monitoring notebooks and school wide shared drive student performance profiles. We strive to provide these opportunities and exhaust all available resources to ensure student success.

Lowrey School's Title I department coordinates with many programs to ensure the success of our students. They work closely with Dearborn Public School District's strong Assessment and Evaluation Department to develop common assessments that enable our staff to utilize formative assessments to drive instruction. In a joint effort, Title I, educators, parents and The Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) coordinate after-school tutoring programs to supplement and enrich instruction. Title I works closely with Lowrey's Reading First Initiative which is a component of No Child Left Behind. This program provides a literacy coach, ongoing professional development and collaborative grade level meetings to drive instructional practices to ensure that literacy instruction is research-based, systematic and explicit.

Our staff participates regularly in sustained research-based professional development to ensure that we provide our students with proven best practices. To ensure that we engage in professional development meetings on a weekly basis, our staff members instituted an early release program that provides us with built-in staff development time. During this time resource teachers, literacy coaches, administrators, and Reading Recovery teachers engage teachers in activities and discussions that introduce and model research-based best practices. Examples of these include the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS), Teacher Reading Academies (TRAs), common assessments, simulations, monitoring student progress, data analysis and the aforementioned research-based instructional strategies.

To further empower teachers, our resource teachers model research-based strategies and targeting best practices. For example, earlier this school year resource teachers pushed into our 13 upper elementary classrooms for one hour a day over a period of 4 weeks to model effective instruction in three separate writing genres. This model improved writing instruction and student performance across all grade levels.

We have strived to establish partnerships with parents, families and the community. To foster family involvement in our school, all teachers hold meetings to inform parents of classroom expectations and involve them in their children's educational experience at Lowrey School. Monthly workshops are held and focus on instructional strategies that empower parents to extend the learning process at home. We also conduct grade level parent meetings to model specific developmentally appropriate strategies that can be implemented at home and support classroom learning. Our community connections are strengthened through our collaborative initiatives with ACCESS and adult education classes provided for community members that are English Language Learners.

Lowrey Elementary is a successful example of what a 21st century public school looks like. By blending hard work, consistency, shared leadership, and professional learning, we have narrowed the achievement gap between the most

successful and at risk students as witnessed by the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) released by the State.

For the past three years, our MEAP (Michigan Educational Assessment Program) score has been higher than the district and the state averages in most subject areas. While the average percentage of our students score in the passing category in all 3rd, 4th and 5th grades is continually increasing (77% in Language Arts and 91% in Mathematics, the cut-off score is 49% in Language Arts and 65% in Mathematics), the number of students who score low is noticeably decreasing. We have been awarded a grade of "A" for the second year in a row by the State of Michigan for our students' performance on the MEAP test and our ability to close the achievement gap in our school. As a staff, we are proud of our learning community.